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ABSTRACT

In structure and in function, the Japanese high school entrance examination--as exemplified by data from Chiba prefecture in 1986--survives as a prewar hierarchical cultural pattern. Postwar American occupation reforms offered "democratic education" in the form of a single-track system with 9 years of compulsory schooling; such a system, ideally, increases educational opportunities. In practice, however, entrance examinations make the system function in the same fashion as the prewar multitrack system. Examinations stratify high school populations into hierarchies; in Chiba, the implicit distinction between those of higher and lower quality is explicitly seen in quantitative ranking based upon examination scores. Examinations promote prefectural level stratification because administrators use the entrance examination to organize secondary education. Educators follow prefectural policy--their careers depend upon students' examination success. The high school entrance examination thus determines emphasis of a particular junior high school on the one hand, and a stratified senior high school population on the other. Education is functionally integrated at the secondary level in that everyone associated with education in the prefecture derives success from performance in relation to the entrance examinations. It is agreed that the purpose of education is to prepare the student to pass the entrance examination. Consensus about this measure of success allows education to function without dissonance. Ideology is accordingly harmonious with a system that integrates American educational structure into the traditional Japanese cultural context. Data from schools are presented; six reference pages conclude the report. (CJH)

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EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN POSTWAR JAPAN

A CASE STUDY OF THE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAMINATION IN CHIBA PREFECTURE

A Paper Presented At the
Annual Conference Of The
Comparative and International Education Society

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Introduction

The United States Education Mission to Japan (USEMJ) was formed by an Educational Directive of 9 January 1946 from the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) to the Japanese government for the purpose of advising both SCAP and the Japanese Ministry of Education on educational matters, and to make "recommendations to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers upon completion of the Mission" (Education in Japan, 1983:106). The recommendations of the USEMJ became the basis for the educational reform policy of the Allied Occupation and, in that regard, continue to shape the course of Japanese education through the contemporary era.

At the core of the recommendations was the reorganization of the public school system into a single 6-3-3-4 track. Extending compulsory education to nine years of schooling (six years of elementary, three years of lower secondary), the intent was to offer educational opportunities to those previously denied access to tracks leading to higher education in the prewar multi-track system. Coalescence of multiple tracks into a single track was the primary structural mechanism to ensure a "democratic education" for Japanese youth upon whom the future of the nation would rest during the postwar period.

"Can the Schools Build Democracy in Japan?" asked George S. Counts, the noted Columbia professor and a member of the USEMJ (Counts, 1946:11). The answer to his question could only be answered in time which would determine whether the structural reforms would result in ideological change as well, although a number of American Occupation

officials would later write in their doctoral dissertations that there was movement in the right direction (Kerlinger, 1953; Benoit, 1958). Yet James I. Doi, who was an interpreter in the Education Division of the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) of SCAP, would challenge the success of the very Occupation of which he was a part (1952).

> One notable difference between a successful and an unsuccessful educational reform appears to be the degree to which a reform or an aspect thereof conformed to the traditions of the people . . . In the 6-3-3 reform, the establishment of comprehensive-type secondary level schools conformed to the long-held desires of parents and students of lower socio-economic classes for greater access to higher educational institutions. However, this aspect of the 6-3-3 reform appears to be headed for rejection largely through the opposition of what appears to be a well-organized group of educators and laymen who regard such secondary schools as poor instruments for the production of the type of talent most needed by society . . . On the basis of what has been said about successful and unsuccessful reforms, it would not be improper to conclude that there has not as yet taken place among the Japanese a widespread rejection of past perspectives and attitudes concerning such educational matters as how the schools should be operated . . . and what the education of their children should be. Their views of such educational problems and activities appear to be substantially what they were prior to the Occupation (Doi, 1952:359-361).

In my view, Doi's forecast is today seen in an educational system which, based upon the educational reforms of the Occupation period, continues to function in terms of the traditional cultural orientation. The following essay, based upon data from Chiba prefecture Japan, will focus on the structure and function of the high school entrance examination in an attempt to illustrate these suppositions.

The High School Entrance Examination: Structure and Function in Secondary Education

The centralization of Japanese education is epitomized by the high school entrance examinations (kootoogakkoo nyuugakusha shiken) which, in practice, make the single-track system of the postwar period function in the same fashion as the multi-track system of the prewar era. Although Rohlen states that "the university entrance exam is the dark engine driving high school culture," an understanding of the 6-3-3 system as it functions in Japan must be based upon an understanding of the role of the high school entrance exam, which is administered by the prefectural board of education (ken kyooiku iinkai), in the shaping of the high school culture about which Rohlen has written (Rohlen, 1983:317). In this regard, the conformity of principals and teachers to the educational system is seen in their commitment to the examination process.

Almost every student who desires to enter a prefectural (kenritsu) or municipal (ichiritsu) high school must take some form of the prefectural high school entrance examination. Exceptions are some returning overseas students, although they usually take portions of the exam, and some vocational track students who may be admitted to high school (kootoogakkoo) by recommendation. Given over a two-day period in late February (February 27-28, 1986) at each of the 143 prefectural and 8 municipal high schools in the prefecture, prospective high school students take the exam at the particular school which they want to attend. A separate exam is also provided for part-time or night-school students and a make-up exam is provided as well.

This past year, 64,070 candidates took the full-time high school entrance examinations for the 53,865 available positions in the 151 public (kooritsu) high schools in Chiba prefecture as seen in Table 1. One thousand, six hundred and ten students would be admitted by recommendation raising the total number of openings to 55,475. The statistical breakdown indicates 60,441 students took the exam for 50,719 positions in the 143 prefectural high schools; two new prefectural high schools came into existence with the new school year. With a built-in-allowance for 1,501 recommendees, there were a total of 52,220 openings in prefectural schools. Another 3,629 students took the same exam for 3,146 positions in the 8 municipal high schools and, with 109 positions for recommendees, there were 3,255 available positions in the municipal schools.

For the 17 prefectural part-time schools, there were 1,240 positions for which 773 students took the exam. For the 1 municipal night-school, there were 80 openings for which 43 applied. For all 18 night-schools then, there were 1,320 openings for which 816 students took the special night-school extrance exam.

Table 1

The High School Entrance Examination

February 27-28, 1986

	Official Openings	Initial Applicants	Actual Candidates	Successful Candidates	Admissions
Prefectural High Schools Full-time (143)	52,220 (50,719)	66,520	60,441	52,921 (1,501)	52,740 (1,501)
Municipal High Schools Full-time (8)	3,255 (3,146)	3,903	3,629	3,333 (109)	---
Prefectural High Schools Part-time (17)	1,240	953	773	592	---
Municipal High Schools Part-time (1)	80	55	43	37	---
Total	56,795 (55,185)	71,431	64,886	56,883 (1,610)	

From "Showa 61 Nendo Kooritsu Kootoogakkoo Nyuugakusha Jookyoo Ichiran Hyoo, "Showa 61 Nen 4 Gatsu 15 Nichi (April 15, 1986)

"Showa 61 Nendo Kooritsu Kootoogakkoo Nyuugakusha Shingansha Kakuteisuu Ichiran," Showa 61 Nen 3 Gatsu 6 Ka (March 6, 1986)

Viewed at the level of the individual school for example, in data recorded by the prefectural board of education as seen in Table 2, Chiba Minami High School had a total of 360 available openings, the equivalent of 8 classes of 45 students per class, yet 523 students had indicated they were going to take the exam, 1.45 students for every position. Over the two-day exam period, 494 of the 523 actually took the exam, 315 boys and 179 girls. Of the 494, 371 passed the exam for Chiba Minami High school, 241 boys and 130 girls. Thus there were 371 students accepted for 360 official slots. The school builds in however an allowance for students who will decline acceptance based upon the number of first-year classes minus 1 in order to compute the actual number of students which they will actually accept. Thus Chiba Minami would accept 367 of the 371 students who passed the exam. In this particular year however, the school deviated slightly from the formula and 369 students actually entered the first-year class beginning with the new school year on April 1, 1986.

By the same token, Chiba High School, considered the best school in the prefecture, had 450 official slots available for which 627 applicants indicated they would take the test. Of these 627, 594 actually came to the school and sat for the exam, 475 boys and 119 girls. Of these 594, 461 actually passed the exam, 370 boys and 91 girls. According to the above formula, there would be room for a maximum of 459 students in the first-year class (10 classes of 45 students per class; 450 plus 10 minus 1). A total of 454 students actually entered Chiba High School in the first-year class for the new school year.

Table 2

The High School Entrance Examination

Selected Schools

	Official Openings	Initial Applicants	Actual Candidates	Successful Candidates	Admissions
Chiba Minami High School	360	523	494	371	360
Chiba High School	450	627	594	461	454
Kimitsu Noorin High School					
Agricultural	40(72)	123	83	44(6)	43
Livestock Breeding	40			42(2)	42
Agricultural Engineering	40(65)	83	77	44(11)	44
Forestry	40			42(4)	42
Home Economics	120(103)	189	146	128(17)	124

From "Showa 61 Nendo Kooritsu Kootoogakkoo Nyuugakusha Jookyoo Ichiran Hyoo," Showa 61 Nen 4 Gatsu 15 Nichi (April 15, 1986)
"Showa 61 Nendo Kooritsu Kootoogakkoo Nyuugakusha Shingansha Kakuteisuu Ichiran," Showa 61 Nen 3 Gatsu 6 Ka (March 6, 1986)

At Kimitsu Noorin High School, applicants took the exam for a particular vocational track. Thus there were 80 openings including 8 slots for recommendees for the agricultural (40) and livestock breeding (40) tracks, 123 interested students, all boys, of whom 83 sat for the exam. Forty-four, including 6 recommendees, were accepted for the agricultural course and 42 including 2 recommendees for livestock breeding. Forty-three actually enrolled in agriculture and 42 in livestock. For agricultural engineering and forestry, there were also 80 positions with 15 slots for recommendees. Of the 83 interested applicants, 77 took the exam, all boys. Forty-four students including 11 recommendees were accepted for agricultural engineering of whom 43 entered the program. Forty-two students including 4 recommendees were accepted for forestry with 42 entering the program. For the home economics course, there were 120 available positions with 17 for recommendees and 189 students interested, all girls. One hundred forty-six students took the exam, 128 accepted including 17 recommendees, and 123 who began the program.

Of the 66,520 students who signed up to take the exam for the prefectural high schools, 60,441 actually took the exam, and 52,921 actually passed the exam, a figure which includes the 1,501 recommendees. There were 52,220 official openings, a figure which includes the recommendees as well, and the actual number of students who entered prefectural high schools for the new school year was 52,740. If the focus is on the difference between those who took the exam and those who entered school, there were 7,701 students who were left out. If the focus is on the number who intended to take the test, then 13,780

students had to find an alternative to a public high school education for that school year. These figures of course do not include those students who simply decided not to apply to take the exam.

These students have several options, the first of which is to drop out of school after their 9 years of compulsory education. A second option is to become a chuugakkoo roonin (roonin translates as masterless samurai) whereby the student stays out of school for a full year and concentrates on preparing for the high school exam the following year which he may take again without prejudice. He may study on his own, hire private tutors, or attend one of the many examination preparatory schools in his area. His third option is to enter a private high school (watakushiritsu) for his final 3 years, or even attend a private high school for a year or two and then take the public high school entrance examination again. Students often take a private high school entrance exam prior to the public one as a precaution in the event of failure. In Chiba prefecture, there are presently 63,737 students attending 52 private high schools, approximately 28.98% of the total high school population. Of the 23,559 first-year private school students (Showa 60/1985), the question is how many of them are refugees from the public school system, considering the 52,220 official openings.

Given the fact that almost every public school student in Chiba takes the high school entrance examination, the importance placed upon the exam by teachers, principals, and administrators is hardly surprising. That this exam is constructed and administered at the prefectural level is a reflection of the prefecture's involvement at every level of the Japanese educational system. In this regard, the

examination system reflects the dependence of the public schools, the so-called city, town, and village schools for example, upon the prefectural board of education thus serving the institutional function of reinforcing the educational hierarchy.

The responsibility for the examination is placed upon the teacher consultants for the five major subject areas (Japanese, mathematics, science, English, and social studies) in the Supervisors' or Consultants' section (Shidooka) of the Chiba Prefectural Board of Education. Beginning in early July, the consultants supervise the development of the exams which culminate in the two-day examination taken by the students in late February prior to the beginning of the next school year in April. The development of the exams provides a revealing look at the ultimate purposes of the Japanese educational system.

From the time of the initial meeting on July 10th, there were, at the very least, 21 meetings of various members of the examination committees specifically to construct, revise, and review the exams. It is interesting to note that each one of the five subject-area exams, given to full-time, part-time, and make-up students, was constructed by the examination committees, not by a private testing agency. Thus the total involvement of the prefecture with the exams in terms of committee composition and representation of prefecture educators, the education focus selected by these representatives, and the resultant commentary by teachers and the public alike, both positive and negative, reinforces the institutional role of the prefectural board of education to all levels of the educational hierarchy

The general procedure in the developmemt of the exams was for the

five subject-area consultants to isolate themselves from the rest of the section in a separate prefectural education building. Sometimes at separate tables in the same room, and sometimes at tables in two separate rooms, the examination committees would meet throughout the day. Although the primary figures were the consultants themselves, especially during the latter stages of the process, they were assisted by educators in their subject areas whom they selected from the prefecture at large.

The English-language committee, for example, was composed of nine members, including myself. The two primary members were the two English consultants of the Shidooka, Inoue sensei who had the responsibility for the English program at the high school level, and Shiratori sensei who had the responsibility for English at the level of compulsory education. Inoue as the high school consultant, and as the senior person, had primary responsibility for the English examination. The third member of the group was Nishikiouri sensei, the kyookashidooin or assistant to the English consultant, who taught English at Togane High School.

The five remaining members included two representatives from the General Education Center, both of whom had been teachers prior to their present positions. Motohiro sensei had previously taught English at the high school level, and Matsumoto sensei had previously taught at the junior high school level. One of the committee members, Takahashi sensei who had taught junior high school, came from the district education center of Higashi-Katsushika. The two remaining members were both teachers, Ikeda sensei from Kemigaya High School and Suzuki sensei

from Isobei Daini Junior High School. In a structural sense, the committee was organized along high school/junior high school lines with four representatives from each level.

In the initial meetings, each of the committee members submitted drafts of the several parts of the examination. After reviewing these drafts, the short essay for example, the members by consensus decided which of the drafts were more appropriate for use on the examination. These drafts were consistently reviewed by the committee in several meetings over a two-month period whereupon by early September, the basic outline of the exam had taken form. The same procedure was also being followed in the other four subject areas.

From mid-September through late October, the two consultants continually worked the drafts into form whereupon on October 29, 1985, the final drafts for all subjects were presented to the Vice-Superintendent for his review. In late November and into December, the two consultants with the assistant consultant met concerning the part-time exam which was much simpler and easier to construct.

From the beginning of the new year in January through until mid-February, all the subject-area consultants met on five occasions at the printing bureau in Tokyo to review the exams as they would appear in their final form. The January 8th meeting saw 17 consultants including myself travel to Tokyo for the initial review. There were 3 English representatives, 4 Japanese, 4 social studies, 4 science, and 2 mathematics, these figures including various section chiefs sitting in for their subject areas. At the second check on January 22nd, there

were 15 consultants including Mitsuhashi sensei, the chief of the Shidooka, who reviewed each of the five examinations. For the first check of the part-time exam on February 6th, there were 11 consultants including Mitsuhashi, and for the second check on February 20th there were 10 consultants including Mitsuhashi.

On February 21st, the exams were brought to Chiba to the same building where the examination committee had been meeting. With at least 4 consultants there at all times, including through the night, they were kept here until February 26th, the day before they were to be given, when they were picked up by representatives from the individual schools. The prefectural consultants themselves, based upon figures submitted by the individual schools, counted out the exact number of exams and answer sheets for each subject for each school, collated them, and organized them for pick-up by two representatives from each school, the assistant principal and a teacher who served as "bodyguard." The designated time for all 151 high schools to pickup their exams was between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on the morning of the 26th. "Everything is very precise," one consultant noted to me. A new consultant admitted that he "didn't realize what this was all about. It surprised even me," he noted.

The exams were brought back to the schools and given by each school over the two-day period to those students who applied to that particular school to take the test. On the first day, the Japanese-language, the social studies, and the science exams were given in three, fifty-minute sessions under the supervision of the assistant principal of the school as teachers proctored and corrected the tests.

Exams given on the second day were English-language and mathematics in two, fifty-minute sessions.

While the tests were being given, the prefectural consultants were standing by waiting for problems, questions, and commentary by teachers, parents, the general public, and the newspapers. The exams were corrected by the teachers of each school on the afternoon of the day they were given. They were also released to the public by the subject-area consultants within ten minutes after the examination in that subject had begun. The entire examination for each subject appeared in the evening newspaper on the day it was given to the students. On the first day, the Japanese-language, science, and social studies consultants answered calls concerning their particular exams all afternoon and into the next day. An error had been found in the social studies exam by several schools which meant that it had to be corrected. Thus each one of the 151 schools had to be notified of the change. This was done through a telephone network as the consultants then proceeded to call 18 predetermined schools who in turn notified other schools in the network. The newspapers meanwhile had gotten hold of this and had become "persistent" in the words of one consultant, which meant that prefectural personnel had to explain to the general public as well as the teachers what had happened and what was being done.

The same procedure was repeated on the second day as the English-language and the mathematics consultants stood by. The second day was snowy and windy and the first order of business, for everyone had arrived early, was to call the railroad and bus lines throughout the

prefecture to check on delays. It turned out that this was a relatively minor problem only in the northern part of the prefecture where there was a twenty-minute delay. What if it was a major problem? They would then proceed to notify all 151 high schools through their telephone network. With the exams released to the public through the newspaper, the English and mathematics consultants answered calls and waited for comments through the day and into the following day.

On March 6th, the final results of the examinations were called in to the Shidooka by the individual schools. These results were also posted by the individual schools as they were released to the public. Students found out their status by visiting the school where they took the exam and reviewing the posted listing. In many cases however, parents or teachers came in place of the student as a buffer in the event of failure. The individual schools later submitted a follow-up report to the prefecture.

Student involvement in the high school entrance exam is total to say the least. What is important here, given other published works on Japanese education, is to focus on the function of the exam based upon the data from Chiba prefecture. These data will support many of the general statements made by Rohlen based upon his study of the Kobe city schools (1983).

In the February 6, 1986 edition of the Chiba Nippoo newspaper, a list of the number of prospective applicants for each of the 143 prefectural and 8 municipal high schools appeared along with the number of official openings and the ratio of applicants to openings as seen in Table 3 ("61 Nendo Kennai Kooritsu Kookoo no Shiboo Jookyoo"). Thus for

Table 3

The 1986 High School Entrance Examination

Applicants and Openings

High School	First Call (2/6/86) Applicants	Openings	Ratio	Second Call (2/14/86) Applicants	Openings	Ratio
Chiba High School	625	450	1.39	627	450	1.39
Chiba Minami High School	526	360	1.46	523	360	1.45
Oihama High School	442	450	0.98	467	450	1.04
Funabashi Higashi High School	592	360	1.64	570	360	1.58
Prefectural Total	66,574	52,220	1.31	66,490	52,220	1.31

From "61 Nendo Kennai Kooritsu Kookoo no Shiboo Jookyoo," Chiba Nippoo, Showa 61 Nen 2 Gatsu 6 Ka (February 6, 1986)
"61 Nendo Kooritsu Shigansha no Kakuteisuu," Chiba Nippoo, Showa 61 Nen 2 Gatsu 14 Ka (February 14, 1986)

Chiba High School for example, there were 625 candidates for the 450 official openings for a ratio of 1.39 candidates for each position. For Chiba Minami High School, there were 526 candidates for 360 positions for a ratio of 1.46. For Oihama High School located in the southern part of Chiba city, there were 442 applicants for 450 positions for a ratio of 0.98. And for Funabashi Higashi High School located in Funabashi city, there were 592 applicants for 360 positions for a ratio of 1.64 applicants to positions.

This listing was referred to as the "first call." The individual schools record their applicant data whereupon it is compiled by the Shidooka into a listing for the prefecture as a whole. It is then offered to the public at large and students in particular who can then weigh the competition and their prospects for gaining admission to the school to which they initially applied.

The second call, dated February 13, 1986, based upon prefectural data, shows the adjustments made since the first call. At Chiba High School, there were now 627 applicants for the 450 openings, an increase of 2 which didn't affect the overall ration. At Chiba Minami High School, there were now 523 applicants for the 360 openings, a decrease of 3 for a ratio of 1.45. At Oihama High School however, there were now 467 applicants for the 450 positions, an increase of 25 which changed the ratio from 0.98 to 1.04. And at Funabashi Higashi High School, the number of applicants was now 570, down 22, for the 360 positions, a change in the ratio from 1.64 to 1.58 ("Showa 61 Nendo Kooritsu Kootoogakkoo Nyuugakusha Shigansha Kakuteisuu Ichiran").

These adjustments reflect the intense jockeying for the available positions relative to the applicant pool and the realization by the student of his ability and the nature of the school to which he applies. The crucial element here is that the student takes the high school entrance examination only for the one school where he actually sits for the exam. In practice, this means that if the student applies to Chiba High School, he is 1 of 627 applicants for the 450 positions only at Chiba High School. He has committed himself to Chiba High School only. If he succeeds in his aims, he becomes one of the 454 members of the first year class. If he fails, as 133 students did (from the 594 students who actually took the exam), then not only does he fail to enter Chiba High School but any public high school as well. Considering that Chiba High School is considered the best high school in the prefecture, and that only the very best students will even apply, 133 to 173 of the very best students in the prefecture (depending on which figures are used) failed to enter a public high school in Chiba prefecture for the present school year. What this means is that students and their families will very carefully determine their admission prospects to those schools appropriate to the student's abilities, based upon academic performance during junior high school, performance or practice examinations, and published information on previous examinations as noted below. The implication is that public high schools within the prefecture are somehow ranked based upon the ability level of the students whom they enroll.

Discussions with teachers over this question invariably lead to the higher/lower quality school dichotomy and to a ranking of the top

three or four schools in the prefecture in approximately the following order: Chiba High School, Higashi-Katsushika High School, Funabashi Kenritsu High School, and Chiba Joshi High School. This ranking is reinforced, and potential applicant decisions are made, based upon the quantitative rankings done by private educational organizations. Thus for example, on February 3, 1986, in the Chiba Nippoo newspaper, a listing appeared of the 117 academic or regular course high schools (futsuuka) with their projected average and minimum passing scores on this year's entrance exam to be given February 26-27, 1986, based upon data from the previous three years (Zenkenhensachi Kokobetsu Gookaku Heikenten-Gookaku Saiteiten). Based upon a score of 100 for each of the five major subjects, the projected average score for Chiba High School was 442 with the projected minimum score as 423. For Chiba Minami High School, the projected average score was 369 while the projected minimum was 351. For Oihama High School, the projected average was 296 and the projected minimum was 256, and for Funabashi Higashi High School, the figures were 387 and 368. Projections for vocational schools such as Kimitsu Noorin High School were not even given (Todai Semina Muhonbu).

What appears in the newspaper is based upon private educational research organizations which publish school by school analyses of applicants. Thus, high school exam data is available for the last three years in terms of the number of openings, the number of applicants, ratio of applicants to openings, number of those who sat for the test, number who passed, ratio of successful applicants to the total, and scores based upon a conversion table. Thus for the previous school year, 589 applicants took the exam for Chiba High School, 559 actually

sat for the test (1.31), and 460 passed the test with an average score of 70.6. For Higashi-Katsushika High School, 754 students applied for the 450 positions (1.68), 688 actually sat for the test, and 458 passed the test with an average score of 68.3. Thus Higashi-Katsushika High School may be ranked 2.3 points lower than Chiba High School. For Chiba Minami High School, there were 461 applicants for 360 positions (1.28), 369 passed out of 450 who took the test (1.22), and their average score was 61.4. For Kimitsu Noorin High School, for the agricultural and livestock breeding tracks, there were 80 openings including 7 by recommendation, 85 applicants (1.16), 66 took the exam, the same exam given to the applicants for Chiba High School, all of whom passed with an average score of 36.5 (Shingaku Shishin: Shingaku Kenkyuukai).

The data are even further broken down to show successful applicants by location, exact scores which they achieve, and male/female success ratio. Based upon these figures, it is therefore quite easy to quantitatively rank order all public high schools in Chiba as well as to adjust the rankings year by year. Thus one teacher told me that his school had been ranked around seventh or eighth but had jumped to fifth as a result of the previous year's scores.

What this all means is that the student candidate knows the reputation and the ranking of the particular school to which he is applying and the past ratio of those who were successful. The junior high school student thus knows well in advance which educational level he must aim for as he attempts to enter the high school of his choice. He is guided in this regard by teachers, counselors, and parents who attempt to steer him toward success in terms of the school where he has

the best chance to succeed. Because every student in Chiba prefecture takes the same high school entrance examination over the same two-day period, at the high school which he wants to enter, there is very little room for a margin of error. In this regard, the price is extremely high, i.e., he will be unable to enter any public high school for that school year if he fails the examination. He has other options but they exclude the public high school for that year. There is very little opportunity to "shoot for the stars," to gamble on what he may want, what he might have a chance at, but what he realistically knows his chances for success are limited. The price is simply too high.

The student is thus being tracked, with his knowledge and with the knowledge of his parents and teachers, into public schools which are quantitatively ranked based upon the scores of a single two-day examination in five subject-areas. He will enter a higher or lower level school, an academic course school or a vocational school, a full-time school or a part-time or night school. The high school entrance examination serves the purpose of stratifying the student population based upon testing ability into a hierarchy of upper secondary schools which graduate their students into a corresponding academic and occupational hierarchy.

In this regard, the stratification function of the secondary school system is reinforced by the personnel of that system. It is seen at the highest levels of the prefecture in that it is prefectural personnel who are primarily responsible for construction of the entrance examinations. Yet it is the principal and the teacher who continually reinforce this process by their acceptance of the importance of the high

school entrance examination in particular and the university entrance exam as well. It is this fact, seen within the context of the prefecture's employment and administration of educational personnel, that shapes the character of education in Chiba prefecture. Teachers must teach to examinations and, it is their job, given the measure of success, to ensure that their students pass the examinations which they take. By the same token, the success of the principal is dependent upon how well his students do on the examinations and their very prestige is dependent upon the schools in which they teach and supervise. These conditions leave little room for individuality and creativity in Japanese education, what an American member of the Occupation period might refer to as democracy in the classroom. In Chiba prefecture in particular then, the success of those committed to an educational career is quantitatively measured by the same test which determines their students' success and which originates with the Chiba Prefectural Board of Education with the support of those very educators whose careers depend upon it.

Analysis

The 6-3-3 educational structure, which was initiated during the Occupation period, has remained the same into the contemporary era yet that system also came to serve different purposes than what was originally intended. Today, the new system functions much in accordance with the prewar pattern primarily because the high school entrance examinations serve to stratify the student population into an educational hierarchy at the high school level. There is an implicit

distinction in Chiba high schools between those of higher and lower quality which is explicitly seen in a quantitative ranking based upon entrance examination scores. Whereas American high schools stratify students within the comprehensive school through tracking based upon ability levels as well, the Japanese upper secondary schools stratify students into vocational and academic tracks of various levels through allocation of students into separate schools. There still remain vocational high schools in Chiba prefecture which serve the same purposes as the two- to five-year vocational schools of the prewar period. There are still exclusively girls' high schools in Chiba as well and within the coeducational schools, students are still segregated on the basis of sex into seats, rows, and classes. The high school entrance examinations continue to send a large portion of the high school population outside the public school system and, although there are good private high schools, the public school system generally has greater prestige for those in the higher levels of the academic track. It also costs much less. The secondary system of the postwar era continues to function in much the same manner as the prewar system of forty years ago.

Although the university entrance examination sets the educational tone throughout the country, Rohlen has written that "the time of high school entrance examination represents an even more crucial juncture in the total process of educational stratification" (Rohlen, 1983:121). The high school entrance exam serves this purpose on a prefectural scale as it is the primary means by which the prefectural board of education

organizes secondary level education. Because teachers and administrators at all educational levels are in fact prefectural employees as a result of changes in the school board law, they have little choice but to follow prefectural educational policy. Their careers in fact depend to a large extent upon the success of their students on the entrance exams, the cornerstone of that policy, as curriculum and instruction must both be directed toward these ends, thus reinforcing the central role which the examinations play at the secondary level. Stratification of junior high school students into senior high schools then determines the character of that particular school and sets the student's course for his final three years of public school. The same cycle is again repeated for most academically-tracked students as they move on to the university level. It is simply that the high school entrance exam is taken by the majority of prospective high school students and therefore determines the emphasis of the junior high school on the one hand and the population of the senior high school on the other.

The exam also serves the function of establishing the role of the prefectural board of education in the schools throughout the prefecture. In terms of the academic cycle, it is the climax of the school year for all educational personnel concerned with secondary education. It consumes an inordinate amount of time on the part of the prefectural consultants who incorporate the most promising junior and senior high school teachers in their subject area into the educational hierarchy through their involvement on the examination committees. Because the prefectural consultants eventually become the principals

themselves, as well as the assistant principals who have primary responsibility for academic matters, the system continues to turn out the best and the brightest administrators whose access to their position was based upon their involvement and their success in managing the entrance exams for their particular discipline.

The Japanese educational system is thus functionally integrated at the secondary level in the sense that the success of everyone associated with education in the prefecture is, to a large extent, based upon their success in terms of the entrance examination. What is significant in this regard is the explicit recognition of the purposes of secondary education, to prepare students to pass the entrance exams. Because the system functions toward this end, and because educational personnel are in agreement with the measure of success, education in Chiba functions without the dissonance that characterizes much of the American educational process. That is not to minimize the problems of the Japanese educational system but rather to note that the consensus on the direction of the educational process and the measure of success in this direction indicates that the ideology of the system is in congruence with the functioning of the system. The Japanese educational system has thus integrated the American educational structure into the context of the traditional Japanese cultural pattern leading to the question of whether the American educational structure serves the same purpose in American society as well.

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LIST OF JAPANESE TERMS

Chuugakkoo: the junior high school

Chuugakkoo roonin: literally, junior high school masterless samurai; junior high school graduates who sit out the year in preparation for the high school entrance examinations

Futsuuka: the regular or academic course of study

Ichiritsu: municipal (schools)

Ken kyooiku iinkai: the prefectural board of education

Kenritsu: Prefectural (schools)

Kooritsu: public (schools)

Kootoogakkoo: the high school

Kootoogakkoo nyuugakusha shiken: the high school entrance examination

Kyookashidooin: the teacher appointed by the subject-area consultant of the prefectural board of education to assist him in his duties.

Noorin: a contraction of noogyoo meaning agriculture and ringyoo meaning forestry as in Kimitsu Noorin High Schoiol

Sensei: teacher

Shidooka: the supervisors' or consultants' section of the prefectural board of education

Shidooshuji: the supervisor or consultant of the prefectural board of education

Watakushiritsu: private (schools)